



UNITED STATES ARMY MILITARY ASSISTANCE GROUP
(USAMAG)

WELCOME GUIDE 2021



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Legal Disclaimer

The information provided in this Welcome Guide is for general informational purposes only. This Welcome Guide does not substitute DoD or DoS authorities. Whenever the information contained in this guide conflicts with DoD or DoS authorities, the provisions of the latter shall govern. All information in this guide is provided in good faith, however USAMAG leadership reserves the right to modify or suspend the privileges outlined in this guide based upon mission requirements and the circumstances in KSA



Unit Address:
PSC 1203 Unit 61308
APO AE 09803

WELCOME!

On behalf of Colonel James Zanella, the USAMAG Program Manager (PM), we are very excited to have you join our organization. You will find your tour with the USAMAG Program both rewarding and challenging as you help to expand our country's strategic relationship with an important international partner, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).



Description, Organization and Functions

USAMAG is a Security Cooperation Organization under the military command of Army Materiel Command (AMC) headquartered at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. The Program Manager reports directly to the United States Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC) Commander. However, the unit falls under the Operational Authority of the Chief of Mission/US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, who has overall responsibility for all US Government activities in Saudi Arabia.

The USAMAG mission is to train and advise the Saudi Ministry of Interior (MOI) and State Security Presidential (SSP) as a valued security cooperation partner. The vision is to set a regional standard that delivers unique security assistance solutions in a lasting partnership.

USAMAG is made of three different entities which are

- The Headquarters which is made up of the Command Group and General (G)-staff in Riyadh
- Jeddah Facility Security Forces-Training Advisory Group, Detachment 1
- Dammam Facility Security Forces-Training Advisory Group, Detachment 2
- Riyadh Facility Security Forces-Training Advisory Group, Detachment 3

Other major agencies include the US Military Training Mission – Saudi Arabia (USMTM), Office of the Program Manager Saudi Arabian National Guard (OPM SANG), and a military police expeditionary security force.



SAUDI ARABIA – THE HOST NATION

Area, Geography, and Climate

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) occupies approximately 870,000 square miles or four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula. It is roughly equal in area to that part of the United States that lies east of the Mississippi River.

The Kingdom's climate is generally comparable to that of the American Southwest, with intense summer heat being the most notable feature. Summer temperatures frequently exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit over much of the country, accompanied by high humidity along both coasts. The weather is generally mild and pleasant from October to April.

Nighttime temperatures occasionally drop below freezing in mid-winter along the northern frontier and the West Coast's higher mountains. Rainfall over the entire peninsula is sparse and generally confined to the winter and early spring months. In some years, rain may be almost nonexistent except for the mountain regions of Asir.

The Country of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam and home to Islam's two holiest sites in Mecca and Medina. With a population of over 27 million people, 90% practice the official religion of Islam. Saudi Arabia is north of Oman and Yemen, borders the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Saudi Arabia is unique because it is the largest country globally without a river, yet is rich in oil and other valuable resources.

Until recent decades, Saudis were primarily nomadic or semi-nomadic people. Under the influence of rapid economic development spurred by the exploitation of vast oil resources, migration to the principal cities has steadily increased. Today, nomads are estimated to comprise only 15% of the population. The Saudi Arabian Government, set up as an absolute monarchy, has encouraged a shift from pastoral to fixed agricultural pursuits.

Saudi Arabia has an oil-based economy with strong government control over major economic activities. It possesses about 16% of the world's proven petroleum reserves, ranks as the largest exporter of petroleum, and plays a leading role in OPEC. The petroleum sector accounts for roughly 87% of the budget revenues, 42% of GDP, and 90% of export earnings.

Saudi Arabia is encouraging its private sector to diversify its economy and employ more Saudi nationals. Over 6 million foreign workers play an essential role in the Saudi economy, particularly in the oil and service sectors. As a whole, Saudi Arabia is remaining a powerhouse within its region, despite the surrounding conflicts taking place in neighboring countries.



CUSTOMS OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Ahlan Wa Sahlan is the Arabic expression for "Welcome." It literally means family and flat land, which might strike the non-Arabic speaker as a strange way to say welcome. However, the expression is a shortened form of an expression which means "you came to our family and you will be moving on flat land." Traditionally, the host tribe welcomed the visitor with these words to indicate that during his stay he would be traveling on smooth land, for the Bedouin do not like hilly, bumpy ways. The traditional answer to this welcome is "Ahlan Wa Sahalen Beek."

In any case, we welcome you to our USAMAG family, and hope that by reviewing this Handbook you will feel as comfortable as we do in the lives we lead with the USAMAG program. Saudi Arabian social practices come from centuries-old customs, and when understood, enrich the lives we lead while living in the Kingdom. Saudis are justly famous for their hospitality; a guest is treated with courtesy and graciousness, no matter what the station of his host.

Hosts and Guests

While the culture in Saudi Arabia is different than many are accustomed to, the rich history and traditions of Saudi Arabia are evident immediately upon arrival. Respect of others is paramount, and Islam is the religion of the land. Arab hospitality and generosity are renowned as well. What began centuries ago as a Bedouin practice of providing food and shelter to wanderers in the desert, has evolved into established customs. Today we find host and guest are governed by many subtle and unexpressed rules. These general rules apply to most Saudis, not to the millions of expatriate workers in the Kingdom. We include some of these general rules here to prepare everyone for what will no doubt be a delightful and fun adventure in the Kingdom.

- Rule #1: A guest is welcome at any time. When we invite someone over, we normally designate a specific time and date. However, invitations in the Middle East may seem vague to us. Although a Saudi may not be specific about a time, he will give you an approximate time. Time is indeed relative and starting times for events are just general windows. For example, a wedding may start at 8:30 PM, and you may find that when you show up, only the host and immediate family are there at the wedding hall.
- Rule #2: Food and drink must be offered. In the American culture, a casual visitor to our home may or may not be offered food or drink; the Arab always offers. If the guest cannot stay, he must at least have coffee or tea before leaving, lest he offend his host. Note: It is important to always accept food or drink with your right hand. When you wish to refuse the next cup of coffee or tea, simply give your cup a little shake; otherwise your cup will continually be replenished.



- Rule #3: Separation of the sexes may occur. If a couple is invited to a social event at someone's house or apartment, the female spouse may be separated to join the women in their living area. Do not be nervous! The women will be very polite and hospitable, and it will be an interesting and enjoyable experience.
- Rule #4: You are not expected to bring a gift for the lady of the house. It would be preferable and appreciated to bring something for the children or for the house. Some examples of gifts include candy or appropriately aged toys for the children, or flowers or anything else for the house.
- Rule #5: If you enter a restaurant where someone you know is present, he then becomes the host. The host offers his table and refreshments. The new arrival can accept if he is free or decline gracefully if he is joining someone. If two people dining together are of unequal financial status, the higher status person normally takes on the host role and pays. However, the guest should try to pay, even to the point of physically pulling at the bill, until his offer is refused.
- Rule #6: If an Arab co-worker stops by your door around a meal or break time and asks if you are going to lunch or coffee, by his rules he should pay. To insist to pay your own way means you do not like him or want him around.

Some Do's and Don'ts

Saudis may take offense at words or actions that seem harmless to us. Realizing that we are in their country, we need to make every effort to adhere to their customs. If you have a basic understanding of Arabic culture, the people will seem friendly and their lifestyle less foreign and imposing. And when they see that you are attempting to adapt, they will be more sympathetic to any social mistakes you may commit. The following list should help you in your relationships with Saudis.

- DO get to meet and know Saudis and other Arabs. We have much in common and your stay in Saudi Arabia will be greatly enhanced.
- DO try to learn the Arabic language and become fluent in common greetings and conversational Arabic. This will pay great dividends in your efforts to develop friendships with the Saudi people.
- DO NOT stare at, speak to, or pay undue attention to veiled women or to people who are praying.
- DO NOT photograph veiled women, people praying, or any scenes in poorer sections of the city.
- DO NOT photograph any person without his permission, or any airport facility, port, or government installation without official permission. Aerial photographs of Saudi Arabia are also prohibited.
- DO NOT enter mosques or the holy cities of Mecca and Medina unless you are a Muslim or a participant of an organized sanctioned tour.



Arabic words for everyday common use

English	Arabic	Pronunciation
Hello	مرحبا	Marhaba
Good Morning	صباح الخير	Sabahul kheir
Good Evening	مساء الخير	Masaul kheir
How are you?	كيف حالك	Kayfa Haluka
I am fine	أنا بخير	Ana Bekhair
Thank you	شكرا	Shokran
Your ID	هويته	Haweyatak
Your Fingerprints	بصمة يديك	Basmat yadayk
Raise your hand	ارفع يديك	Erfaa yadayk
Your hands up	يديك لأعلى	Yadayk Aala
Your hands down	يديك لأسفل	Yadayk Asfal
Only one	واحد فقط	Wahid Fakat
Only once	مرة واحدة	Mara Wahida
Twice	مرتين	Maratayn
Wait	انتظر	Entazir
Go on	استمر	Estamir
Stop	توقف	Tawaqaf
Stand up	قف	Kif
Sit down	اجلس	Eglis
Turn round	استدير	Estadeir
Come	تعالى	Ta ala
Go	اذهب	Ezhab
Leave	يُغادر	Yoghadir
Take off the watch	إِخلع الساعة	Ekhlaa Alsaah
Start / Begin	ابدأ	Ebdaa
Finish	إنهى	Enhi
Turn on	يشغل	Yoshagel
Turn off	يُطفئ	Yotfya
Repeat	يكرر	Yokarir
Hurry up	أسرع	Asre'a
Slow down	إبطيء	Ebte'a
Show	إظهر	Ezhir
Hide	إخفي	Ekhfi
Listen	إستمع	Estate'a
Hear	إسمع	Esma'a
Open (the door)	إفتح (الباب)	Eftah (al bab)
Close (the door)	سكّر (الباب)	Saqir (al bab)



English	Arabic	Pronunciation
How?	كيف	Kayfa
How Many?	ما عدد	Ma Addad
How Much?	ما كمية	Ma Kemyya
How Deep?	ما عمق	Ma Omq
How Far?	ما المسافة / ما بعد	Mal Masafa
How Often?	كم مرة	Kam Marrah
What's your name?	ما اسمك	Ma Esmak
What's your nationality?	ما جنسيتك	Ma Genseyatak
Do you hear me?	هل تسمعي	Hal Tasmaoni
Do you understand me?	هل تفهمني	Hal Tafhamoni
Right	يمين	Yameen
Left	يسار	Yassar
Up	أعلى	Aala
Down	أسفل	Asfal
Under	تحت	Taht
Above	فوق	Fawqa
Between	بين	Bayna
Labourer	عامل	Amel
Employee	موظف	Mowazzaf
Civilian	مدني	Madani
Military / Soldier	عسكري	Askari
Responsible	مسئول	Masoul
Manager / Director	مدير	Mudeer
Boss / Cheif	رئيس	Rae's
Help	مساعدة	Mosa'da
I appreciate your concern	أقدر اهتمامك	Okadir Ehtimamak
Place	مكان	Makan
Time	وقت / زمان	Wagt / Zaman
Work Time	وقت الدوام	Wagt Dawam
Start time	وقت البداية	Wagt Bedaya
End Time	وقت النهاية	Wagt Nehaya



WORKING AND LIVING IN SAUDI ARABIA

All USAMAG Personnel

USAMAG military personnel receive orders for an unaccompanied tour, typically 420 days in duration. Civilian employees have an option for a one-year unaccompanied or two-year accompanied tour. The USAMAG staff work a 5-day week, Sunday through Thursday. Friday and Saturday are the weekends in Saudi Arabia; Friday is the Muslim holy day. The work day begins at 0730 and ends at 1700 with a 30-minute lunch break.

USAMAG HEADQUARTERS – RIYADH

Riyadh is the capital of Saudi Arabia, having over 9 million people within its limits. The city has numerous historical landmarks and contemporary architecture, setting it apart from all other cities.

USAMAG personnel live on a secure housing compound named Al Nakhla. Common use facilities within Al Nakhla compound include a swimming pool, tennis, racquetball, basketball courts, a gym, and movie theater. Page 7 of this guide gives a more detailed overview of the Al Nakhla Residential Resort in Riyadh.

Dammam Facility Security Forces-Training Advisory Group

Dammam is located in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom on the Arabian Gulf. Due to the location of Dammam, it has a mix of several different ethnicities and nationalities. This mixture of culture has made a major impact on the cuisine within that region.

USAMAG personnel work at the FSF Eastern Regional Training Center. Personnel currently live on a secure compound. The villas within the compound are fully equipped and fully furnished. However, you may bring small personal appliances.

The Dammam Consulate has a full service APO, including registered mail, money orders, claims and inquiries. Pictures of the Dammam compound are below.



Jeddah Facility Security Forces-Training Advisory Group

Jeddah—also commonly spelled Jiddah or Juddah—located on the Red Sea in Western Saudi Arabia, is one of the world's oldest inhabited places with tradition saying that Eve was buried here after she left the Garden of Eden. It is a centuries-old route to Mecca for pilgrims throughout the Islamic world and has become one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities. Today, more than 1 million people live in Jeddah and approximately half of them are foreigners. It is one of Saudi Arabia's largest city, as well as its greatest commercial center.

USAMAG staff reside in a secure compound, a gated/access-controlled residential compound managed by the Arabian Homes Company and features furnished, apartment-style living quarters.

The Jeddah Consulate has a full service APO, including registered mail, money orders, claims and inquiries, and stamp sales.

Clothing, Uniforms, and Equipment

The year around duty uniform is the Operational Camouflage Pattern (OCP) while USAMAG are still residing on Eskan Village. While at Al Nakhla, personnel will adhere to the dress code for civilian wear. Please see the packing list found at the end of this packet for specifics. All personnel are required to have at least one ASU and/or Mess Dress uniform along with appropriate business clothing to attend coat and tie events that are hosted by the Embassy. Warm clothing is necessary for the winter months.

Dress Code

There are 5 types of authorized civilian dress code for USAMAG. Those are Casual, Work-Military, Business Casual, Smart Casual and Business Informal. Below is a description of each.

Casual: pants or jeans and a shirt. Shirts must meet the criteria of non-offensive logos/wording and must have sleeves with no rips or holes. Jeans and pants may not have any holes and may not be frayed.

Work-CIV/MIL- cargo pants, polo style or collared shirt, combat boots, military belt.

Business Casual - cargo pants/slacks, collared shirt, dress shoes or loafers.

Smart Casual - business Casual with sport coat. You may wear dressier type jeans.

Business Informal - suit and tie or nice slacks and sport jacket, shirt and tie.

Bottom Line: When at work, you will follow the above as directed and authorized. When going into public while in KSA for leisure, casual or higher will be used at all times.



For at-home/on compound activities, clothing requirements for women are much the same as in the United States; however, more conservative attire for the ladies will be necessary in Saudi towns, i.e., long sleeve blouses, high neck, full length dresses or slacks. In public—off the secured compound—all women are strongly advised to wear an "Abaya" and carry a scarf (in case you are asked to cover your head). The abaya is a black, long sleeved, floor length, traditional outer garment for women and is the culturally appropriate outerwear for females raveling outside of Eskin Village/Al Nakhla.

Packing List

Please use the below list to ensure you are properly prepared for life in Saudi Arabia.

1. Operational Camouflage Pattern (OCP) (minimum of 2 sets)
2. OCP T-shirt (minimum of 6)
3. Socks (6 minimum)
4. Combat Boots (2 minimum)
5. Patrol Cap (2 minimum)
6. Subdued U.S. flag for OCP uniform (2 minimum), AMC Patch
5. Underwear
6. Ballistic eyewear (1 pair)
7. Prescription eyewear
8. Hygiene kit
9. ASUs/Mess Dress
10. Army PT Uniform (minimum of 1 set)
11. Athletic gear for personal fitness
12. Athletic shoes
13. Athletic socks (minimum 4 pairs)

MEN:

14. Men's Business Attire (as applicable)
15. Suit (Additional suits can be easily tailor made in Saudi Arabia)



- 16. Khakis/Dress Pants
- 17. Belt
- 18. Tie (minimum of 2)
- 19. Button-down Collared Shirt (minimum of 2)
- 20. Collared Polo (minimum of 2)
- 21. Dress Shoes
- 22. Blazer/Sports Coat (A MUST for Pre-Deployment Training)

WOMEN:

- 23. Women's Business Attire (as applicable)
- 24. Abaya for females (Must be worn before disembarking from airplane in Riyadh)
- 25. Modest Pants/Skirt
- 26. Conservative Long-sleeved Blouse (minimum of 2)
- 27. Dress Shoes
- 28. Conservative Cocktail Dress (high neck-line, covering shoulders, at or below the knee)

ALL:

- 29. Comfortable Civilian Attire, to include weather appropriate clothing as temperatures can range from 30-130 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 30. Sunglasses (recommended)
- 31. Civilian headgear (recommended)
- 32. Specialty personal hygiene
- 33. Specialty cookware not listed on soft pack list
- 34. IBA and ACH - will be drawn at Ft. Bragg CIF during in-processing*
- 35. CIVILIAN Luggage. For yours and others safety, military themed patches, logos, name tapes and military style (camouflaged/olive drab/coyote) luggage and clothing should not be worn.



Bring only what you need upon arrival in KSA. It's best to have **minimal** baggage when going through customs. Get with your sponsor on shipping all non-essential items prior to your arrival. In recent guidance, the Riyadh King Khalid International Airport (KKIA) cannot accept checked baggage over 92 cm x 61 cm x 76 cm (36 in x 24 in x 30 in) and 32 Kilograms (70lbs). Also, the following items are exempt from this new policy: golf bags, golf sticks, live animals, wheel chairs, baby trolleys, and musical instruments. Delta Airlines will also only allow bags under 70lbs. Most baggage fees are reimbursable when you complete your travel voucher at in-processing. *Body armor will be drawn by ALL personnel incoming to the program during in-processing at Ft. Bragg. Please bring enough luggage if you do not want to buy it at Ft. Bragg to hold body armor.

Connecting to Family and Friends

USAMAG issued iPhones provide unlimited Internet and allow hot spotting to connect personal computing devices. The iPhones provide adequate internet speed and bandwidth for hot spot streaming services like Amazon Prime, Netflix, and Hulu etc. to watch movies, sports or your favorite TV shows. It is recommended that you purchase a Virtual Private Network (VPN) account before you arrive in Saudi Arabia. A VPN is used to watch television from a U.S. location. For example, you would need a VPN so that you can watch stateside movies and TV shows on your Amazon Firestick. Some channels may be blocked due to the location. One of the most popular VPNs to purchase is the Express VPN.

From their government issued cellphone, Soldiers are able to make international calls through the Dispatcher Morale Line: +966 (0) 11-498-7260.

There are several popular text messaging apps that are commonly used overseas such as WhatsApp and Signal. Many of these cannot be registered once you arrive in theater unless you register with your local Saudi phone number.

Restaurants

There are many restaurants for your dining pleasure in the major cities of Saudi Arabia. The variety is endless and selection a challenge. Many of the hotels in Riyadh, Dhahran and Jeddah also offer excellent dining.

Restaurateurs cater to the diverse palates found in an international community. Chinese/Szechuan restaurants abound, making a choice difficult. Or perhaps Italian, Mexican, Japanese, Turkish, Lebanese, Indian, Korean, or French, will appeal to you. There are many excellent seafood restaurants available. Familiar fast food establishments have become part of the local scene. You will feel right at home with Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Sizzler, Dunkin Donuts, Krispy Kreme Donuts, Texas Chicken, Subway, Fat Burger, TGIF, Chili's, Applebees, Fuddruckers, Burger King, and McDonald's, to name just a few.



In certain restaurants, women may dine in special family sections and usually only when accompanied by a male relative.

Personal Finance Support

The monetary unit of KSA is the Saudi Arabian Riyal (SAR). There are very limited opportunities to use US dollar physical currency in KSA. Mostly, US dollars are used when purchasing at US Government-based institutions like the commissary or PX or when converting dollars to SARs at local banks. Most transactions take place using Saudi currency, the EagleCash card, the personal credit card (for personal transactions) or the government travel card (required use when on official travel - for official travel only). Soldiers are highly encouraged to apply for the EagleCash stored value card either at Gavin Hall, Ft. Bragg as part of in-processing or at the USMTM Finance Office cashier cage during in-processing at Al Nakala. With the EagleCash card, Soldiers should never need physical US dollar currency because it facilitates transactions in on-base locations that transact in dollars but do not accept physical currency or credit cards. It also makes it possible to contribute to the Savings Deposit Program (SDP) at an on-base Finance Office (only), where only physical cash and EagleCash are accepted for those deposits. EagleCash kiosks, which are needed to load or unload funds from a US bank or to transfer funds between cards, can be found at the cashier cage and the PX/commissary plaza. ATMs are widely available for debit card and credit card withdrawals on base and around most cities and towns. Reliability can depend on location, but your cohorts there can show you where the best ones are.

The USMTM Finance Office at Eskan Village in Riyadh is currently the only Finance Office in KSA. For those traveling through or staying in Riyadh, the Finance Office offers disbursing support (foreign currency exchange between dollars and SARs, EagleCash card services, SDP deposits, check cashing, etc.). Conversion from dollars to SARs is unlimited. However, conversion back to dollars is limited by amount and usually within 30 days of departure on leave, end of tour or other special circumstances. The cashier will want to see your orders showing imminent departure before disbursing US dollar currency.

Soldiers with permanent duty station in Jeddah or Dammam will not have regular access to a DoD Finance Office. Also, full-service Saudi banking is generally not available except for very basic services. However, that has not been a significant issue since most Soldiers have found having ATM access, online banking with mailing services available, as well as infrequent visits to the Finance Office in Riyadh to be more than adequate for their needs. Military pay support is provided through the G-8 Financial Management Advisor. The military pay office coordinates pay actions and inquiries that are handled elsewhere at various CONUS-based state National Guard pay offices, DFAS offices, Reserve Pay Office (Ft. McCoy) and in Kuwait. GUARD MEMBERS: Please be sure to talk to your home unit admin team to get the best contact to receive pay documents from USAMAG and let them know our Milpay advisor will likely be contacting them for assistance in setting up and maintaining your overseas entitlements.



KSA- standard overseas entitlements are paid in accordance with the DoD Financial Management Regulation Volume 7A and include overseas COLA (KSA rate or Jeddah, KSA rate), combat zone tax exclusion, hardship duty pay-locality (KSA rate), and imminent danger pay (KSA rate). Those eligible for family separation pay will apply for that during in-processing at Ft. Bragg. A military entitlements in-brief will be provided during in-processing after initial arrival in Riyadh.

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

Recreational facilities are available to mission members at all in-Kingdom locations. These include movies, some courts and fields for various sports, and swimming pool. Facilities at the US Consulates in Dhahran and Jeddah and the US Embassy in Riyadh are made available to USAMAG members on a limited basis.

Local radio and television stations usually broadcast 24 hours a day. All locations have satellite downlinks providing AFRTS and SEB (Southern European Broadcast). They provide major sports events and news. The cable system works on the US standard (NTSC). Dhahran and Riyadh have at least one English speaking radio station, either AFN or from ARAMCO.



Housing/Furnishings: Al Nakala

All USAMAG villas are fully furnished and are determined by rank and availability. USAMAG also provides the following hard pack items: stove, refrigerator, washer and dryer, microwave oven, and water dispenser in each villa regardless of location. **See SOFTPACK list at the end of the packet for additionally provided items.

Electrical outlets are a mixture of 110V and 220V, so be sure to either bring or obtain adapters on arrival. Various adapters are necessary for three-prong plugs and are available at the PX and local stores.

Inbound personnel should be prepared to purchase items such as a cleaning tools and supplies, and additional linens.

Religious Activities

There are chaplains that provide or sponsor a variety of religious services for personnel. Currently, the OMP-SANG Chaplain provides religious support to all USAMAG personnel. CH (MAJ) Billy Betts is the current OPMSANG



Chaplain, and he can be contacted at billy.c.betts3.mil@mail.mil. Missionary activity is prohibited and can lead to expulsion from the Kingdom.

Legal Services

USAMAG personnel has access to a Staff Judge Advocate Office (OSJA), located at Riyadh. The USAMAG SJA provides legal services to personnel to include preparation of wills and powers of attorney, notary services, and legal assistance.

Legal services are provided for all USAMAG locations within the Kingdom by the SJA at Riyadh. In instances when legal services cannot be provided over the phone or via electronic communication, reasonable arrangements will be made for in person consultations.

Medical, Dental and Health Information

On Al Nakhla, the USMTM Health Clinic is available and provides basic care and vaccinations as well as referrals downtown to medical services as needed. In Jeddah, a local hospital provides medical services as well as dental services through an internal clinic. In Dammam, a local hospital there is available for medical and dental services as well as local referrals. Also from Dammam, access to Naval Support Activity Bahrain Medical Clinic is available for DoD-standard care and medical reporting. Soldiers and DoD civilian employees will set up medical insurance through Tricare Overseas and can get approvals for care payment as well as referrals to local and worldwide providers through Tricare. Pre-approvals are best, as approvals for payment reimbursement can take up to six months or more.

Service members who are on special medications that may not be readily available through military supply channels, must bring at least a six month supply. Upon arrival, notify the USMTM Clinic of these needs during in-processing, so that arrangements can be made to ensure access to these medications is not interrupted. Obstetric care from U.S. military health professionals is currently not available in Saudi Arabia.

Postal Service

The Air Post Office (APO) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a United States Military Post office operated by the personnel assigned to Operating Location B, Ninth Air Force, and United States Air Forces Central (USAFCENT). First Class and Priority Mail from CONUS usually arrives in 10-14 days; mail going to the US usually takes 9-10 days. The USAMAG Unit mail address is as follows:



<p><u>JEDDAH</u></p> <p>Name (no rank) USAMAG</p> <p>Unit 62103</p> <p>APO AE 09811</p>	<p><u>RIYA DH</u></p> <p>Name (no rank) USAMAG</p> <p>PSC 1203 Unit 61308 APO, AE 09803</p>	<p><u>DAMMAM</u></p> <p>Name (no rank) USAMAG</p> <p>Unit 66826</p> <p>APO-AE 09858</p>
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The following items are strictly prohibited from entering or leaving Saudi Arabia by mail through the APO.

- Posters, pictures, paintings, books, catalogs, DVDs, video tapes, or magazines depicting nude or seminude people and pornographic or sexual items of any type (as determined by Saudi Customs).
- Religious items including, but not limited to, bibles, crucifixes, instructional material, or any other items interpreted by customs as religious in nature. Although these items have made it through customs before, please be advised that they will be confiscated.
- History has proved certain items relating to Christmas such as cards, trees, decorations, angels, etc. are subject to confiscation.
- Pork or pork products.
- Alcoholic beverages or any consumable item containing alcohol. This includes distillation equipment and brewing supplies.
- Firearms of any type, including air guns and toy guns.
- Fireworks.
- Government symbols including, but not limited to, stickers and flags.
- Military clothing or equipment, other than for personal use.
- Electronic items including, but not limited to, base stations, hand-held transmitters, cordless telephones, global positioning system (GPS) receivers, etc.
- Candy cigarettes and cigarette advertisements.
- Chemicals, including alcohol (medicinal or industrial).
- Any literature that is determined to be offensive to Saudi culture or its people.



The following items are extremely scrutinized by Saudi Customs. If they contain prohibited content, it can result in fines, confiscation and/or censorship.

- Films, CDs, DVDs
- Video Tapes
- All printed matter, such as books, magazines, catalogs, newspapers, pictures, paintings.
- Medications not supported by a prescription

The important fact to remember is all classes of mail are subject to Saudi Customs inspection upon arrival in the Kingdom. If any item is found to be offensive or prohibited as interpreted by the Laws of the Kingdom, the item will be confiscated and the recipient is subject to fines and/or punishment as appropriate.

Commissary and Exchange Support

The Army/Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) operates a retail store in Riyadh. AAFES stocks adequate quantities of popular brands of toilet articles, soft drinks, tobacco products, photographic and stereo equipment, clothing, and sundries. Any item available in the Army/Air Force Exchange Service catalog, except firearms, may be ordered through the APO mail. Current catalogs from the principal US mail order houses are also available.

The commissary system stocks a complete line of semi-perishable and perishable items basic to family needs. Fresh fruit and vegetables, milk, eggs, yogurts, chilled juices and other dairy items are procured on the local economy. The commissary also has a "down range" shopping program for personnel not located in Riyadh.

In all three locations, there are many places to buy food in the local area. Fresh produce, and dry goods are available. The local supermarkets now stock many western products, especially meat. There are Panda Stores in the area, and they carry mostly U.S. products at a slightly higher price than in the States. Many Wal-Mart type stores are located within a short-distance drive from most locations. Many of the wares associated with the Middle East, Iran, Pakistan, India, Japan, and parts of Europe are also available.

There are local stores with a brand name selections of most items you can purchase in the states. The PX has household items, small appliances, white goods, office-type supplies, toiletries and personal hygiene items, a few clothes, over-the-counter medicines, tools, suitcases, cosmetics, and magazines (similar to the selection at a CVS/Walgreens).

Travel

An official passport and Saudi visa are required for entry and exit from Saudi Arabia. The mobilization NCOIC will provide further guidance on how to apply. Unless you have the passport and visa in hand upon arrival at the aerial port of embarkation, you will probably incur considerable hardship and delay. If you reach Saudi Arabia without a passport and visa, you will be forced to take the next available aircraft out of the country.



The Government of Saudi Arabia refuses admission and transit to holders of a passport or visa with a declaration that it has been or is valid for Israel. It is strongly advised to also have a Tourist Passport for travel outside of Saudi Arabia and the United States.

Port of entry for replacement personnel assigned to USAMAG is King Khalid International Airport (KKIA) in Riyadh, SA. Your sponsor and/or other designated USAMAG personnel will meet you upon arrival and escort you to Eskan Village. Timely receipt of travel itineraries on incoming personnel will reduce inconvenience upon arrival in Saudi Arabia; therefore, you should provide your sponsor with your scheduled arrival time, by email, as soon as possible. Further, it is **required that you travel in civilian clothing**. There are No U.S Carriers that fly to KSA. All flights in will be on foreign Air Carriers. For females, it is encouraged that they put on the Abaya before disembarking from the airplane in Riyadh.

Permanent change of station (PCS) travel to KSA requires some planning for official travel and for household goods (HHG) storage and/or shipment. If you need to ship or store household goods or a POV, the time to begin planning is even before receiving your PCS orders. Read through the appropriate tutorials on the DoD Customer Moving Portal website at Move.mil. At that website is a search tool at <https://move.mil/resources/locator-maps> that will help you reach your local Transportation Management Office (TMO) team. Once you are able to contact the TMO, you will have a ready resource to assist you with coordinating all your shipment and storage as well as any claims with DFAS. Once you receive your PCS orders, you can then initiate an official request to ship or store HHG or POV with the help of your TMO office and the DPS system within Move.mil. Upon arrival in KSA, you will coordinate delivery of your HHG through the USMTM J-4 TMO in Riyadh.

During your official travel to Ft. Bragg and then KSA, baggage under 70 lbs. will typically make it through check-in at airports. Be sure to ask for the "check military bags" option at the check-in kiosk or counter wherever possible with a copy of your PCS orders to avoid baggage fees on flights. If you are unable to avoid baggage or excess baggage fees for any reason, please request a receipt from the check-in counter (they do not always offer) and work with G-8 Travel at KSA in-processing to file that claim. For travelers over 400 miles away from Ft. Bragg, NC, air travel is the directed method of travel. Variances from this will require solid justification and are approved at the O-6/GS-15 level. Please discuss any alternative arrangements you need with the Mobilization NCO to begin the approval process as soon as possible if you require an alternative arrangement.

All personnel on tour with the USAMAG program are required to use the GTCC for all official travel starting on the effective date of PCS orders. For nearly all travel (except for initial flights into country) you will pay using the GTCC and file for reimbursement at the end of the trip. If you do not have an active GTCC, you are required to get one and maintain it as a requirement for this tour. Personal funds and personal credit card are not to be used for official travel unless good faith efforts to use it were made but failed by the time of the voucher filing. Begin coordinating with your home unit travel card administrator and follow his/her process to get that set up.



If you have your PCS orders without an active GTCC, let the Mobilization NCO know as soon as possible to begin working with the program for any available cost reduction alternatives. You will need to have necessary personal funds available to pay for all travel expenses except for the flights to KSA (CBA-billed).

Your first voucher at in-processing in Riyadh will be a manual DD 1351-2. After that, nearly all TDY travel will be booked and vouchered using the Defense Travel System (DTS) and the local Travel Management Company (TMC) called Ace Travel (via Carlson Wagonlit Travel/SATO) in Riyadh. Please conclude all open vouchers with your home unit and then contact your DTS administrator there to release your DTS profile. Once the DTS profile is released, our G-8 Travel office will begin setting it up for coordination of your TDY travel while on tour with our program. The G-8 Travel Office will reach out to you once your orders are published, but address any questions or concerns relating to GTCC, DTS Travel and military pay/entitlements to MSG Troy A. Davis, troy.a.davis.mil@mail.mil, DSN 318-448-7441 or international commercial +966 11 498 7300, then #, then 448-7441, then 1."

Entitlements

All military entitlements are DoD-standard based on the DoD Financial Management Regulation (DoD FMR) Volume 7A, the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR), and other DoD-appropriate regulations based on official PCS duty on an unaccompanied tour with no dependents also living in Saudi Arabia.

1. Base Pay for Military Personnel: Determined by pay grade and years of service. <https://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/>
2. Base Pay for Civilian Personnel: Please discuss pay and entitlements with your CPAC point of contact.
3. Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH): BAH is determine by dependency status, years of service, pay grade, and zip code on the orders. <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>
4. Overseas Cost of Living Allowance (OCOLA): All Soldiers in the Kingdom are entitled OCOLA. Determined by pay grade and years of service at the provided rate. <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/colaCalc.cfm>
5. Imminent Danger Pay (IDP): IDP pay of \$225.00 per month may be authorized. If receiving IDP, then HDP-L is reduced. Effective 14 September 2019, IDP is authorized for KSA for soldiers.
6. Hardship Duty Pay-Location (HDP-L): All Soldiers assigned to KSA receive HDP-L of \$100.00 per month so long as they do not spend more than 30 days outside of KSA during the tour.

Normally starts 30 days after arrival in KSA and is paid back to date of arrival.

7. Basic Allowance for Substance (BAS): All Soldiers receive monthly BAS in KSA. <https://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/payentitlements/Pay-Tables/bas/>



8. Family Separation Allowance (FSA): FSA is determined on dependency status and paid at a rate of \$250.00 a month.

9. Combat Zone Tax Exclusion (CZTE): CZTE is entitled to all Soldiers in KSA. Taxes are refunded at every end of month LES.

10. Shipment of Household Goods: PCS orders must state you are authorized to ship HHG, or you are not authorized for TMO-scheduled pickup or for reimbursement for mail through US Postal Service until an amendment can be produced. Contact the Mobilization NCO for guidance if PCS orders does not state authorization. Refer to JTR, to your designated sponsor, or to G-8 Travel office for specific guidance. For weight allowances, http://www.move.mil/dod/before_you_begin/weight_allowance.cfm.

11. Storage of Household Goods and/or POV: PCS orders must state you are authorized to store HHG, or you are not authorized for paid storage. Most commonly, storage options include:

a. TMO-scheduled non-temporary storage: TMO-arranged movers pick up HHG, DFAS pays the ongoing storage bill, you coordinate to extend service if you extend your tour

b. Personally-procured storage: you find a local storage facility, you pay the ongoing bill, you save all receipts and file claim for reimbursement through your TMO or on a manual travel voucher

c. Privately-owned vehicle (POV) storage: you coordinate storage in a designated facility through your TMO, DFAS pays the ongoing bill, and you coordinate to extend service if you extend your tour.

d. Unaccompanied baggage: you mail certain HHG or items through the US Postal Service as part of the initial move to KSA, you submit your receipts that include the weight of the items shipped to your TMO (near your home or here in KSA when you arrive), TMO provides you a memo with maximum amount claimable for reimbursement, and you file all with your travel voucher

12. Thrift Savings Plan: Soldiers are authorized to participate in Thrift Savings Plan

<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>.

13. Annual Clothing Allowance: Enlisted personnel only. Paid upon end of tour (\$468).

14. Savings Deposit Plan: Deposit cash at a DoD Finance Office (only) via EagleCash or check and earn 10% pre-tax interest for up to \$10,000. Riyadh personnel can deposit up to 1/2 of LES entitlements per month until they reach the maximum. Locations far from Riyadh without access to a Finance Office will be added to a memo waiving the maximum up to \$9,999.99. Normally, eligibility starts after being in country for 30 days.

15. This tour qualifies for Reduced Age Retirement.



Conclusion

Serving with USAMAG is an experience unparalleled by any assignment you will have in your military career. Working within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will provide an opportunity to learn about this country's rich and hospitable culture. It will challenge you and engage your creativity as you work with our dynamic team of U.S. Army, joint service personnel and international attachés. Your work will affect countless others and illuminate the ways in which we are all connected. We welcome you to the mission of USAMAG and assure this assignment will strengthen your career, develop your area of expertise, and build lasting relationships certain to leave an indelible mark on your career.



Colonel James A. Zanella

Program Manager

United States Army Military Assistance Group

An Infantry Officer for over 22 years, COL Zanella commissioned from West Point, in 1999. He was first assigned as a Mechanized Platoon Leader and Heavy Mortar Platoon Leader with 1st Battalion, 36th Armored Infantry Regiment, Friedberg, Germany. COL Zanella deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom from May until November of 2003 as the Heavy Mortar Platoon Leader. Upon redeployment, he trained newly commissioned infantry platoon leaders as a Senior Platoon Trainer and Battalion Operations Officer with 2nd Battalion, 11th Infantry Regiment, Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course.



He took command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division in September 2006 and immediately deployed to Iraq. Stationed at Forward Operating Base Loyalty in East-Baghdad, Iraq; he led the company during 15 months of counterinsurgency operations from 08 October 2006 until 31 December 2007 as part of the Iraq Surge. After 22 months of company command, COL Zanella served as a Maneuver Observer Trainer and Chief of Exercise Control for Operations Group Charlie, United States Army Mission Command Training Program, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. COL Zanella deployed in June 2012 to Kabul, Afghanistan as a Joint Operations Planner for United States Forces – Afghanistan. As a planner with the J5 Plans and Policy Directorate, he worked national contingency plans with USCENTCOM, USEUCOM, the Joint Staff, and other CENTCOM Component Commands. Upon redeployment, COL Zanella trained Ranger Students as the Battalion Operations Officer with the 4th Ranger Training Battalion, Fort Benning, GA from June 2013 until June 2014. Moving across post to the 199th Infantry Brigade (Leader Development), he served as the Brigade Operations Officer until June 2015 and the Brigade Deputy Commander until March 2016. COL Zanella then moved over to the Infantry School and served as the Executive Officer to the Infantry Commandant until December 2016. He then served as the Director of Operations, G3, Maneuver Center of Excellence and Fort Benning, GA until June 2017. COL Zanella then commanded 2nd Battalion, 11th Infantry Regiment, Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course from June 2017 until June 2019. Following command, he moved to Austin, TX to join Army Futures Command as the Deputy Director of Operations from July 2019 until July 2020. COL Zanella then attended Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas as a US Army War College Fellow. Currently, COL Zanella is the Program Manager, United States Army Military Assistance Group as well as the Deputy Program Manager, Office of Program Management, Saudi Arabian National Guard.



COL Zanella holds a Bachelor of Science in Military History from West Point (1999), a Master of Science in International Relations from Troy University (2006), and a Masters of Military Art and Science in Theater Operations from the School of Advanced Military Studies (2012).

COL Zanella's military education includes War College Fellowship; School of Advanced Military Studies; Command and General Staff College; Joint Operations Planner Course; Joint Firepower Course; the Infantry Officers' Advanced and Basic Course; Infantry Mortar Leader's Course; Bradley Fighting Vehicle Commander's Course; Ranger School; Air Assault School; Airborne School; Army Combatives Instructor Levels I and II; the Army Instructor Trainers' Course, and the Master Fitness Trainers Course.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (3x OLC), Army Commendation Medal (3x OLC), Army Achievement Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Meritorious Unit Award, Army Superior Unit Award (1x OLC), National Defense Service Medal (w/ Star), Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal (2x Campaign Stars), Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War On Terrorism Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon (Numeral 3), NATO Service Medal (ISAF), Ranger Tab, Airborne Wings, Air Assault Wings, Expert Infantryman's Badge, Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency in Gold and Bronze.

COL Zanella is married to the former Heather Howell Bibb, and they have two sons: Clark and Grayson.



SGM Matthew Strasser

Senior Enlisted Advisor

United States Army Military Assistance Group

Sergeant Major Strasser entered military service as a member of the Iowa National Guard in March of 1993. Since then, he has served in various leadership positions to include Team Leader, Scout Section Sergeant, Scout Platoon Sergeant, 1st Sergeant, BCT Operations Sergeant Major, CSM of the 1-113 Cavalry Squadron, and CSM for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.



SGM Strasser has multiple deployments to include KFOR 5B (Kosovo) as a Platoon Sergeant, Operation Enduring Freedom 5/6 (Afghanistan) as an Embedded Training Team (ETT) Senior NCO Mentor, Operation Enduring Freedom 10/11 (Afghanistan) as the 2/34 IBCT Operations Sergeant Major, and KFOR 28 (Kosovo) as the 2/34 IBCT and KFOR Regional Command - East CSM. He also has four rotations at Combat Training Centers.

SGM Strasser's military education includes 19D Cavalry Scout Basic Combat Training, Primary Leadership and Development Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course Phases I and II, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course Phases I, II and IIB, Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education II, Distributed Leader Course 6, Advanced Military Transition Team, United States Army Sergeant's Major Course and the U.S. Army War College Nominative Leaders Course.

His awards and decorations include The Legion of Merit (1 OLC), Bronze Star Medal (1 OLC), Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal (2 OLC), Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (6 OLC), National Defense Service Medal (1 OLC), Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, NATO Medal, NATO Non-Article 5 Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Development Ribbon (Numeral 6), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (Numeral 4), Army Reserve Component Overseas Training (Numeral 4), Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal (1 campaign star), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (3 campaign stars), Combat Action Badge, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Meritorious Unit Citation and the Order of Saint George.

SGM Strasser has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Upper Iowa University.

He is married and has two sons.



MOI-MAG BASIC ISSUE ITEMS HAND RECEIPT

VILLA # _____

ITEM NAME

SHEET SET	EA	1	1					
MATTRESS PAD	EA	1	1					
COMFORTER	EA	1	1					
PILLOWS	EA	2	2					
BATH TOWEL SET	EA	1	1					
BATH MAT	EA	1	1					
TRASH CAN, SM	EA	1	1					
TOILET BRUSH	EA	1	1					
TOILET PLUNGER	EA	1	1					
CAN OPENER (Manual or Electric)	EA	1	1					
COFFEE POT	EA	1	1					
CUTTING BOARD	EA	1	1					
DISH DRAIN w/BOARD	EA	1	1					
DISH SET FOR 4 PERSON	EA	1	1					
SILVERWARE SET FOR 4 w/TRAY	ST	1	1					
GLASSWARE 12 oz & 8 oz	EA	8	8					
CUTLERY SET (KNIFE SET)	EA	1	1					
COOKING UTENCIL SET (5pcs)	EA	1	1					
POTS AND PANS SET (5pcs)	ST	1	1					
TRASH CAN, LG	ST	1	1					
LAUNDRY BASKET	ST	1	1					
BROOM w/ DUSTPAN	EA	1	1					
MOP AND MOP BUCKET	EA	1	1					
IRONING BOARD	EA	1	1					
IRON	EA	1	1					
VACUUM CLEANER	EA	1	1					



POWERSTRIP	EA	1	1				
PHONE, LANDLINE (if available)	EA	1	1				
TOOL SET, SM	EA	1	1				
EMERGENCY LAMP	EA	1	1				
BBQ ACCESSORIES SET	EA	1	1				
BBQ GRILL (shared)	EA	1	1				
PROPANE TANK (shared)	EA	1	1				
OUTDOOR PATIO SET (shared)	EA	1	1				
WATER HOSE (shared)	EA	1	1				
				Initials			
<p>* I have inventoried the above listed items and have noted any discrepancies. I will notify the G4 if any items listed above are damaged or inoperable.</p>							
NAME:							
SIGNATURE:							
DATE:							
<p>* Note: Additional items MAY be in your Villa. These items were procured by individuals and left behind as a convenience to incoming personnel. MOI-MAG is only responsible for the Basic Issue Items listed above. Any additional items are the responsibility of the tenant.</p>							

